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AUTHOR Monahan, William G.; Smith, Edwin R.

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ABSTRACT

Some important conclusions and recommendations may be drawn from comparing U.S. Army leadership processes to the state-of-the-art in educational administration: (1) army leadership development works in the ways intended; (2) leadership must be learned, not taught; and (3) everybody involved must truly participate. Site-based management makes no sense to army commanders; from squad to division, everybody must know how to lead his/her piece of the system and the accompanying prerogatives and responsibilities. Management is top-down in terms of operational authority and accountability, but is bottom-up in terms of effectiveness. There are also important contextual and institutional structure differences between the Army and educational administration. Progress toward a superintendency or through academic ranks is less defined than the Army's clearly explicit system of ranks and statuses, accompanied by systematic formal and continuous formal evaluations and specific education requirements to be earned internally and at traditional higher education institutions. The Army provides leadership lessons for educational administration: (1) both purpose and program must be well-defined; (2) leading is not managing; (3) leadership has to be shaped; (4) leadership's essence is trust, confidence, and will; and (5) leadership must be both practiced and assessed. An attached paper, "Military and Educational Leadership: A Comparative Investigation," explains these ideas more fully. (MLH)

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LEADING PEOPLE OR MANAGING THINGS

[A Summary Paper of A Comparative Investigation of Leadership Development and Practices in Educational and Military (US Army) Organizations.][1]

by

William G. Monahan and Edwin R. Smith,
Department of Education Administration
West Virginia University

Introduction

This paper presents an abbreviated summary of an exploration that has occupied the writers for most of the past 30 months. In this paper, prepared especially for presentation at the meeting of the American Association of School Administrators in New Orleans in March, 1991, the emphasis is on some of the more pertinent (in our view) observations and ideas.

For the background of this work and a better developed perspective on the comments herein, the reader is urged to read a previous paper presented at the meeting of AASA in 1990 which is included herein as an attachment. That statement also contains useful material that further differentiates these two quite important cultural institutions and it seemed prudent to us to provide that rather than engage in considerable repetition.

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[1] This paper highlights some of the observations, conclusions and implications of the study involved. It is drawn from a more comprehensive draft of the "final report." Potential publishers for that ms. have not yet been contacted. Citations or references to the material presented here in any published work require permission of the authors.

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Fundamental Conclusions

There are a number of what we would consider rather important conclusions and recomendations that can be drawn from this exploration of US Army leadership processes when compared with the state-of-the-art in Educational organizations. In these comments we highlight some of those.

At least three very important and fundamental conclusions are of particular importance as we have reflected on the effort.

Army Leadership Development "Works." --First, the most impressive consequence of this more than two year exploration is genuine respect for the thoroughness and effectiveness of the US Army's leadership development and practices on the one hand, and the conviction that it works in the ways intended on the other. Although one of us, having served through the rank of COLONEL in the Army Reserves already knew much about that, the other of us entered into this study with considerable skepticism. Both of us have come out of this experience with a renewed and remarkable confidence in the processes by which the Army prepares its leaders.

Unquestionably, the current operations in the Persian Gulf will test the extent to which the ultimate, "winning warfighting," objective of Army leadership development and training is achievable but other and perhaps less dramatic measures of its effectiveness have already been demonstrated.

Leadership has to be learned. -- Secondly, "leading" can't really be "taught." At least, it can't be taught in the same way that one can teach someone how to read, or how to repair a watch. Leadership preparation is much like "coaching." It can be nurtured and developed and shaped but in final analysis it has to be learned through practice and performance "feedback."

Everybody involved must be involved. -- Thirdly, everybody who is intimately involved in the long or the short-run must know what's going on and they need to want to be, and feel that are, a part of it. There is, certainly, a relatively rigid "division-of-labor" in military structures and accountability is an exact correlate of rank and authority but any mission or operation is always intensively "briefed" and "debriefed." So called 'site-based' management is an idea that simply makes no sense to Army Commanders -- why should that be emphasized? From Squad to Division, everybody must know how to lead their piece of the system, and know what their prerogatives and their responsibilities are. It may be top-down in terms of operational

authority and accountability but for the endeavor itself, it's bottom-up in terms of effectiveness.

Other Important Factors

Contextual Differences

It is important to reiterate the importance of the idea of "context" to this exploration and to our general observations. In general, it is this "contextualism" that makes all of the difference between leadership in the US Army on the one hand and in educational institutions at all levels on the other. But it is the "context" as well, that creates the conditions in which all kinds of leaders confront the challenges of their competence.

Certainly, there are important aspects of the "context" that characterize the nature of any cultural institution and these aspects are unique to the particular institution itself. Thus, the "profession of Arms" and the "profession of education administration" function within the boundaries of some relatively fixed conditions. But other aspects of the "context" change -- sometimes dramatically -- and are therefore responsive to a variety of both internal and external circumstances within which all of our institutions are deeply embedded.

The larger context has seen almost revolutionary change since we began this exploration. In that regard, it is of more than passing interest to note the nature of the way our world has changed in just two years. If one recalls something Alfred North Whitehead once said, it is not an unreasonable observation to suggest that this modest study began in the 20th Century and has ended in the 21st! Whitehead once observed that the 19th Century ended in 1914. In a similar sense, one could assert that the 20th ended in 1989.

Consider: When we began this exploration, in late 1988, US Army leadership doctrine was still, and significantly, embedded in the "Cold War." Operational and tactical cases, scenarios and problems, and even strategic policy at highest levels -- all of that was predicated on the problematic presumption that "warfighting" ultimately had to involve the super-powers. Yet, by 1989, that entire context was made obsolete by the almost startling supremacy of market Capitalism and accompanying political emergence of democratic self-determinism in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. The quintessential symbolic manifestation of this new world order was the dismantling of the "Berlin Wall."

When we visited the Army War College at Carlisle, Pennsylvania in late Spring of 1990 therefore, the whole world had seemingly been turned upside-down. What many of the high ranking Army personnel wanted to talk about were immense managerial and policy challenges -- the enormous logistical and socio-economic problems involved with "down-sizing" the military. Literally thousands of field-grade officers now (then) knew clearly that their careers were soon to end; they (and we) confronted the realization that there would surely be significant de-mobilization throughout the world and particularly in western Europe.

While no one anticipated the incredible rapidity with which this new threat from Iraq would temporarily suspend those enormous problems, they remain to be dealt with since there is also the presumption that the middle-east crisis will not be a very long and drawn-out operation.

How very quickly, the external "context" changes!

The Institutional Structure

Nevertheless, in terms of comparisons of educational leadership development and practice with that of the Army, it is the relatively fixed conditions of institutional structure that form the major distinctions and therefore provide the salient bases within which such comparisons must be qualified. And regardless of world events otherwise, the nature of military leadership development and processes are now so well-institutionalized that even major strategic changes are not likely to affect military leadership "doctrine" at infra-structure levels very much.

Accordingly, since it is this infra-structure of leadership development and practice that constituted our primary focus of interest, we want to briefly review some important aspects of structural differentiation.

Reiterating the important differences (see attached paper for a more detailed analysis), the Army is a quasi-closed system whereas, Education is a quasi-open system. Everyone begins a career as an Army officer in one of only three ways -- as graduates of West Point, collegiate ROTC programs, or Officer Candidate School (OCS.) And one then moves through a clearly explicit pattern of ranks and statuses, with systematic formal continuous evaluation at each level and in relation to each posting. In addition, one is expected, as he or she moves "up" the hierarchy, to attend and perform with distinction in a variety of "in-service" institutes and schools. At the same time, the Army makes a clear distinction between "in-service" and "continuing" education -- the officer who expects to advance in his or her career is not only required to attend these various

internal programs but, in addition, it is axiomatic that he or she must also earn graduate academic degrees in traditional colleges and universities. In many cases, the latter are supported by the Army when the disciplines pursued for advanced degrees are determined to be of particular utility to military needs.

As was recently stated by MAJ.GENERAL Howard D. Graves:

> "Army support and sponsorship for graduate-level civilian education remains a strength. The Army Educational Requirements System provides a mechanism by which Army major commands and agencies validate needs for graduate degrees by discipline in specific Army positions. These validated requirements become the basis for Army funding to send officers to obtain graduate degrees."[2]

But it is again important to emphasize that even when such continuing education is not subsidized, significant numbers of Army officers pursue advanced degrees on their own initiative. In fact, among Army ROTC Cadre, it is almost <u>assumed</u> that graduate work will be pursued in institutions in which such personnel are assigned.

In this regard, it is interesting to compare the academic credentials of high ranking Army officers with that of other "leaders." In one such study, comparing Army Brigadier Generals with top executives (corporate CEO's) 55% of the CEO's held <u>only</u> baccalaureate degrees compared to only 3% of the Generals while 88% of the Generals held MA degrees compared to only 19% of CEO's. Of those holding doctorates, the Generals came off a little less well -- 9% compared to 11%. But it should be remembered that there are far fewer Generals than CEO's.[3]

So what? A fairly large proportion of field-grade Army officers --Major and above -- have earned MA degrees at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas but a still larger number have earned MAs at traditional universities. In essence, the "doctrine" holds that one can certainly earn a graduate degree in leadership itself and through the fully accredited curriculum at CGSC but <u>all</u> graduates of CGSC do not opt for the MA program preferring "certification" and then (or prior to that) matriculating in standard graduate programs.

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[2] M.GEN H.D. Graves, "Educating U.S. Army Officers," <u>PARAMETERS</u> (Journal of the Army War College), August, 1990.

[3] See, Michael Satchell et. al., "The Military's New Stars," <u>US NEWS AND WORLD REPORT</u>, April 18, 1988.

The ultimate "in-service" institutes -- the various War Colleges offer no academic degrees but it is uncommonly rare for anyone to be invited to attend these institutions without significant academic credentials. Moreover, attendance and distinctive performance at a War College is universally required in order to be promoted to General rank.

The important thing for us to remember about these various procedures is simply this: whoever will rise to the rank of General by, say, the year 2010 is somewhere in the US Army right now.

In advancing one's career within Education Administration on the other hand, the distinction between "in-service" Education and academic, "continuing" Education is more obscure. Other than a loosely codified set of "certification" requirements specified through State Departments of Education (SEA's) for generic roles -- principals and supervisors -- there is no systematic pattern of either "in-service" institutes nor academic credential(s) required. There are normative expectations; and one who aspires to be a school Superintendent and rise through our "ranks" to the more prestigious and challenging positions must earn the doctorate. But there is little consensus on what the degree should entail and there are no established internal "institutes" that are prerequisite to practice. In large measure, the extent to which one is best prepared for leadership responsibility is left to individual interests and initiatives or to the vagaries of what some Board of Education decides it thinks it wants. (In one School District advertising for a Superintendent, the Board required candidates to have an MBA degree! That's like presuming an automobile mechanic is automatically qualified to repair a twin-engine aircraft!)

To large extent, a part of the reason for this somewhat chaotic or at least, ill-defined pattern is owing to the fact that the "doctrine" in Educational Administration is itself ill-defined and unsystematized. There is a "knowledge base" in our field but it is mostly unorganized and therefore too incoherent.

By the same token, because ours' is a relatively "open" system, in the field of Education Administration there is no explicit recognition of a hierarchy of rank-and-role; in other words, one doesn't have to serve in a small system before assuming the leadership of a large one nor does one necessarily have to have served in a Principalship before assuming a superintedency, nor is it expected or presumed that one have had experience in "staff" as well as "command" functions. Because the "doctrine" simply isn't that well codified such protocols are difficult to prescribe and impossible to enforce.

In higher education, the situation is even more perverse. Colleges and universities find themselves in a remarkable kind of leadership ambiguity; on the one hand there is impressive evidence that collegiate administrators now must have extensive competence in management and leadership activities and yet, the ideology controlling the pathways to collegiate presidencies still clings steadfastly to the old notion of "primus inter pares" -- first among equals.

[One is thus reminded of the old anecdote about a college president who had three predecessors in a single year but who managed, himself, to survive quite well for fifteen years; one day he wondered about this to a longtime member of the faculty who explained it in this fashion: "We didn't really want a President and you were the closest thing to it we could find."]

The issue of shared authority is a vital one in a growingly complex world but even under the best of circumstances, one still risks much in turning over the asylum to the inmates.

It is certainly also important in this regard to point out another major distinction in context: an important component of the definition of schools as "quasi-open" systems has to do with their being structured in a much more intensive and much more intimate policy/governance arrangement than almost any other social institution. Accordingly, the fiduciary nature of local Boards of Education (and collegiate Trustees) constrains the ability of being able to impose explicit leadership requirements to which they must adhere. The US Army is far less subject to any similar kind of decentralized policy structure. As a much more cohesive national institution, its governance is constrained only at highest levels of Strategy and policy and thus there is significant coherence within its personnel management enterprises.

Leadership Lessons and Things to Consider

Given that there are important contextual differences between military and educational institutions then, are there leadership lessons and implications for our field that we can learn from the Army?

Certainly. We suggest just a few in closing this summary.

(1) The Problem of Purpose Definition

In introductory comments to a previous paper on this topic (see, attached) we briefly traced some aspects of the so-called "educational reform" movement that we considered relevant to our exploration of Army leadership. An important point in that discussion which was reinforced in many of our conversations with Army personnel has to do with the lack of any clear message

regarding what it is exactly that America's schools are supposed to do.

Repeatedly in our discussions with high ranking Army officers, the importance of knowing rather explicitly what is expected of units, personnel, systems, weapons, programs, and whatever-else was impressed on us. Unless one knows exactly what one's mission is, not only is it unlikely that anything purposeful will occur but it is almost impossible to evaluate it.

In this business of schooling, we desperately need to more definitely determine what it is that we are about. Schools are too much expected to be everything for everybody and end-up being not enough for anyone. Though schools are unique cultural agencies which reflect dominant values, we confront no clear cultural mandate in contemporary America. You name an "interest group" and it has an agenda for us; business interests expect things of us that ethnic minorities reject; increasing diversity expects things of us that violate others' pressures for homogenization. Schooling in America today is, indeed, damned if it does or if it doesn't.

Through a professional association such as AASA, we ought to convene a "National Educational Policy" commission of some nature and hammer-out a national agenda. We do not need to involve every other stake-holder in our enterprise in order to do that nor do we need to worry too much as to whether all of those others agree with us. What we do need is a systematic definition of purpose. It can be designed in such a way that the agenda produced can be occasionally adjusted and amended as the need requires but if "we" are the nominal "leaders" of schools then let us LEAD!

One is reminded of some lines from one of Faulkner's books in that regard; paraphrasing him, he tells about this old guy who was driving a wagon load of cotton out of a field when he confronted another man standing in the road. He said, "Get on the G___-d____wagon or get out of the G___-d_____ way."

We cannot lead effectively until all of us know more clearly where it is, exactly, that we want to go. Given that, some of us need to either "get on the wagon or get out of the way!"

(2) Program Definition

The field of Education Administration critically requires more precise operational definition of the preparation components that ought to constitute advanced study. This doesn't mean that our present curricula are inappropriate but there is too much variation across what are supposed to be otherwise similar programs. Even more importantly, the definition of preparation components should be a professional obligation and the practice

of having such curricula determined by state regulatory agencies should be discouraged. Our experience with such coteries as the National Policy Board, the late, great National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, and other such "voices" has been both disappointing and largely impotent.

AASA already has an established vehicle well-suited to this task -- its standing Higher Education Committee. Let them get about that important task.

(3) Leading is not managing.

Following somewhat on that, too much of what we have been involved with over the past quarter of a century has been dominated by a concern for management. No one can lead effectively unless he or she is a competent manager and much of what we need to know requires considerable sophistication in management technology. But good management --even excellent management -- is insufficient.

We asked many of our Army interviewees about this distinction between management and leadership. One of the more succinct responses came from LT.GEN. Dave Palmer, Superintendent of the US Military Academy. He told us that while management and leadership are similar in many ways, "You can't manage people up a hill!"*

We do not necessarily need less additional training in management, though in our view we suffer too much of that -- but certainly, we need considerably more in leadership itself.

(4) Leadership has to be shaped.

We should give much serious attention to leadership development --not alone so far as we, ourselves, are concerned but perhaps more importantly, in our subordinates. Too much of what people have to learn in order to assume leadership roles in our profession is left to their own devices. Persons in established leadership roles must assume more deliberate responsibility for identifying potential, allowing and encouraging such persons to pursue available leadership training, and help them and those of us in the training arm, to make it easier for such persons to attend.

Moreover, we must find ways by which such persons can be provided more appropriate funding in order to pursue advanced preparation.

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* See the attached paper for a more detailed discussion of GEN. Palmer's responses in this area.

At West Virginia University, we are now in process of designing a year-long Administrative Leadership Institute modelled less ambitiously of course but somewhat along the lines of the Command and General Staff College of the Army. Originally, it was our intent to develop a program that would appeal to retiring field-grade Army officers interested in careers in Capital "E" education. That is still a major focus of that idea but as we began to work on it, it became clear that such an Institute is needed generally. This program will provide work only roughly equivalent to doctoral level course work and although there will be a "diplomate" of some kind attached to completion, it will provide no academic degree as such. Persons will be selected based on criteria appropriate to backgrounds and circumstances such as recommendations of senior, active administrators, rigorous qualification evaluation for leadership potential, and articulate communication skills.

In such a program, retired military personnel enjoy a distinct advantage of course; they have at least a dependable source of compensation. But such a program may also attract other sources of funding.

"Classes" in such an Institute will matriculate as a cohort -- that is, they will come in together and go through the program together. If, at the end of such a program, anyone desires to go on for the doctorate, that can be arranged but that is not its purpose.

We will provide more information about that to anyone who might be interested but the point we wish to emphasize is that we should initiate more of that sort of residential institute. Such a program would involve intimate collaboration with practicing administrators and other institutional leaders and we have much more flexibility in the Academy for that sort of innovation than most people realize. But unless there are known opportunities within which potential leaders can grow and study and engage in pragmatic dialogue and simulation exercises, there is little point to anyone's simply knowing someone "good" who might help us solve our problems down the road.

Needless perhaps to say, work on that initiative is currently somewhat moot considering the War in the Persian Gulf. But under presumptive circumstances as we observed above, that Operation may not be of great duration and in any case, at its conclusion, the problems of "downsizing" so far as Military personnel are concerned are merely on "hold."[5]

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[5] As a matter of fact, in this regard, the apparently effective performance of "reserves" and the efficiency with which such units and personnel have been activated and "ready" will have some important impact on military personnel decisions in the

(5) The Essence of Leadership is Trust, Confidence, and Will.

Literally every high ranking Army officer we talked with in our study told us the same thing about the essence of leadership -- that the most important, and by the same token, the most difficult thing, about it is the twin notions of trust and confidence. They told us that it is very difficult to learn to let others lead; that it is especially difficult to allow someone else to do something that you yourself simply know that you could probably do better and especially so when you have just spent a long "tour" doing those same things!

But confidence in subordinates is simply vital. Confidence is a curious thing -- unless one expresses it by his or her own behaviors, those in whom it must be expressed can't internalize it. That's how one comes to believe as well, that those above themselves have confidence in their own ability, too.

Finally, one can know enough, be trusted enough, and even have considerable confidence but all of that notwithstanding, one must have the will to do what must be done. GENERAL Palmer told us:

> ...it amounts to two things: Knowing what you ought to do and having the moral courage to do it. It's more than just integrity and honesty -- you can be a very honest person and not have the strength of will to be a leader.

(6) Leadership must be Practiced and it Must be Assessed.

Leadership is not always nor necessarily heroic activity.* But it is accountable activity and it does require courage and will. And in order for leadership to improve, it must have opportunity to be tried on the one hand, and it must be appraised on the other. Now by "appraised" we don't refer to conventional methodologies of evaluation though that may surely be an important aspect of appraisal. In the Army, leadership activity whether simulated, or real, is rigorously examined ex post

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future. One implication is that, perhaps, the remarkable performance of "Reserve" forces will dictate the need for a much smaller standing Army than might even otherwise have been assumed.

* The notion of leadership as "heroic" activity prompted a provocative discussion in our study. A brief paper recounting some of that dialogue was an interesting diversion. See, W.G. Monahan, "Leadership and Heroism: A Dialogue," unpublished paper, College of Human Resources and Education, West Virginia University, 1990. (Limited copies available on request.)

factum. In all cases, this involves on-going and systematic systems of "fitness" analyses but of more value, it also involves one-on-one counseling and feedback.

Of equal importance, we must get better at choosing subordinates on the basis of explicit competence and potential. Issues of affirmative action notwithstanding, we must be much more rigorous in promoting people on the basis of competence. An incisive leader knows first of all that he or she must hire people who are not only better then he or she is, but who probably feel, deep-down, they could do the job better. It's particularly satisfying to bask in reflected glory. If we hire losers for good but wrong reasons, we're going to lose with them.

A Closing Observation

When all of the smoke cleared at the end of this study, we sat around and reflected a bit on the overall status of our profession compared to that of the military. A number of things have occurred to us. In large measure, certainly, there is much that we can learn from each other. There is much that we could do in our field in leadership development that the US Army does and it wouldn't require all that much additional effort or resources. And there is much that the Army does superbly well that we simply will never be able to do.

Still, when we look out across our field, and think of the many practicing leaders we know of personally or by reputation, and consider the quality of the academic programs available for ambitious people interested in serving in these pressure-packed educational administrative functions, we feel pretty good. We also believe that there are not nearly enough of the really top-notch people we need but we also believe that given some important changes in structure and attitude, we're much closer than our critics allow.

We're not doing too badly. We can, and we must, do much better still.

ATTACHMENT

MILITARY AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A COMPARATIVE INVESTIGATION

by

William G. Monahan and Edwin R. Smith[1]

[A WORKING PAPER ON LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRESENTED AT THE MEETING OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, SAN FRANCISO, CA., FEBRUARY 26, 1990]

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Introduction

This paper is adapted from a more comprehensive preliminary REPORT of an extended study that the authors have conducted over the past two years.

That work has been concerned with exploring a variety of aspects of leadership as practiced and embodied in the United States "Military" (explicitly, the US Army Officer Corps) and comparisons with the leadership of educational organizations and programs. In addition and perhaps most importantly, the purpose was to seek applications of military leadership to the work of educational administrators (at all levels) where that was considered to be appropriate.

I

Background

In Summer, 1988, the senior author of this Report presented two papers at the meeting of the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) at Western Michigan University, (Kalamazoo,) regarding the training of school administrators. One of these papers was a Critique of the

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[1] Professors of Administration and Higher Education, Department of Education Administration, College of Human Resources and Education, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

1987 statement of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (Leaders for America's School.) [2]

Because one shouldn't be critical without "rival opinions to propose" a companion piece attempted to provide an expanded view of some of the leadership preparation issues that were raised.[3]

In that second piece it was suggested that those of us who both study, and try to prepare, educational administrators ought to explore other "institutional contexts" for some comparable insights; among those suggested was the "profession of arms."

As a consequence, and because one of these writers was at the time a COLONEL in the US Army Reserves and therefore enjoyed some access to US Army structures, we decided to do just that and began an exploration of US Army leadership development that has taken us to the Center for Army Leadership (CAL) at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC), Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas; the US Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York; the US Army War College at Carlisle, Pennsylvania; and NATO General Staff Headquarters in Europe.

The Sources of Our Discontent

Why are we concerned about Educational leadership?

Perhaps needless to remind Educationists, throughout most of the decade of the '80s, there was (and continues to be) an on-going major re-assessment of the structure, function, methods, and general quality of the American system of schooling. (And of Higher Education as well if only to a slightly less extent.)

Within the reform movement, the contribution and effectiveness of educational administrators has been of central critical interest and has, at least, generally, come off as inadequate. The exact nature of the inadequacy is still being vigorously debated.

Although anyone risks much in trying to characterize the overall pattern of national discontent about schools and

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[2] See e.g., LEADERS FOR AMERICA'S SCHOOLS. University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA): Tempe: Arizona State University, 1988.

[3] See, e.g., "Educational Policy and the Triumph of the Half-Baked: Notes on the Preparation of Educational Leaders." College of Human Resources and Education, WVU, Morgantown, WV., 1988.

schooling, there seems to be general consensus that there have been at least four major "targets" for criticism and change:

* Ideology and Method;
* Training and Quality;
* Technology and Support;
* Authority and Power.

None of these areas stand alone; all are pieces of the general "malaise" as various critics conceive it. Accordingly, there is considerable overlap among these concerns and each involves the others in one or another way. In the study and practice of education administration, it is primarily the last of these areas that is at issue and it is within that set of concerns that our work has been framed.

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

After reflecting about a variety of things that are happening in our country in these increasingly unpredictable times -- and especially on the nature and problems of our own field of Education -- it is our conviction that the great crisis confronting us as a society is a crisis in leadership.

Now there are several important dimensions of that crisis as we have thought about it:

First, the leadership crisis is deep and wide-angled. In almost every facet of our institutional infra-structure, leadership is acknowledged as weak. In City Councils, Zoning Commissions, in Governors' Offices, in Corporate Chambers, Federal Policy Bureaus, in schools and universities; -- even in the highest offices in the land -- the vitality of leadership is almost routinely perceived as being far less than we need.

Secondly, we know that this crisis is not confined just to the problems involved in "leading people" -- that is, to the day-in and day-out practice of leadership, no matter how sometimes heroic or mundane. Of perhaps equal importance is a significantly growing inadequacy in what one might call, the "leadership of ideas."

Now what do we mean by that? Just this: in all fields of human endeavor, there have always been public or intellectual elites who are responsible -- though surely in sometimes mystical ways -- for providing the directions in which our institutions and our capacities ought to move. They are not just political, social, or economic theorists, though many are. They are also Journalists, and politicians; academics; corporate executives and financiers; and Judges, and Statesmen, and Educators of various stripes; and also of course, those special "news-media"

personalities who help us to decide what is and isn't important for us to know about every evening at 6 or 7 o'clock.

In other words, those people who in virtue of their status, and/or their knowledge help to define the ideologies that provide the guidance that the rest of us require in order to know what we want to happen and where we want to go.

Suffice to say that after more than two years of serious examination of a variety of "leadership" concerns, it is simply our private view that we now suffer a remarkable mediocrity in the quality of those kind of publicly acknowledged high-minded and powerful personalities and minds that any culture requires for defining its proper purposes and priorities.

In our view, these so-called "voices of wisdom" are themselves in great disarray and disagreement about the purposes and directions that our national institutions ought properly to be put.

Third, we are also convinced that Leadership cannot be "taught" -- that is, it cannot be taught in the same way that we can teach people how to read, or how to design a bridge, or fix a machine. There is no "formula" or push-pull, click-click, system for teaching people how to lead. But we do know that leadership can be learned and that the learning of it can be shaped and nurtured and developed. In all of that, above all else it has to be practiced.

Finally, we are convinced that in the past dozen or so years, we have tended to be confused about the distinctions between leadership and management, and have been too much sold on the idea that we can "manage" our way out of our difficulties. We shall have more to say about that presently.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE LEADERSHIP CRISIS

One clear implication of all of this, in our view (and it is shared by many others) is that the greatest failure of leadership in both of these dimensions -- leading people and leading thought -- has been the inability to convince policy-makers about the genuine needs of the deteriorating American institutional infra-structure. That means, simply, that the most important institutions which will prolong our vitality as a people -- like Education for example -- cannot continue to be starved for adequate resources and be anything other than just marginally effective. It's becoming a familiar message -- why isn't it heard?

For a few examples: Recently Professors Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, authors of a widely publicized report for the US Congress' Joint Economic Committee talked about ways that

America can regain a competitive edge in what is now a Global Market; among things they said:[4]

> We must work not cheaper but smarter with smarter machines. The high road...we must undertake (as a nation) requires enormous new investments in science and technology, in applied research and development, in Education, training and retraining, and in new forms of management that foster teamwork.

And, in that same mood, Michael Milken, the famous "junk bond" expert who helped to finance some of the nation's most innovative and profitable --but risky-- companies with so-called "junk bonds" (and who, despite his significant problems with the Law, just may be the most brilliant young financial mind around today) said this:[5]

> For the US, the most important factor in this new globally competitive environment will be the capabilities of our people. A far more important question than the number of missiles we have will be, "How good is our educational system?" Our most important raw material is our people --our mathematical literacy level, our verbal and written skills, our ability to read, to understand abstract concepts, our ability to manage relations with people.

And Peter Drucker, now in the faculty at the Claremont Graduate School of Business and acknowledged as a leading management "guru" said this:[6]

> (We are now in a "post-business" kind of society;) it's a "knowledge society" and the right kind of education is a new form of security. It's a society (in which) the majority of people make their living as employees in large organizations --government and business. But Business is no longer the main avenue of advancement... Career opportunities increasingly require a university diploma. yet no educational institution --not even the graduate school of management -- tries to equip its

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[4] These comments are excerpted from: New Perspectives Quarterly, Fall, 1989. p.37.

[5] Ibid., p. 19.

[6] Ibid., p. 23.

> students with the elementary skills that would make them effective as members of an organization: the ability to present ideas orally and in writing; the ability to work with people; the ability to shape and direct one's own work... The "educated person" ought to be the new archetype of the post-business society.

One wonders what is takes to wake-up those who ought surely to know that as long as teachers are paid far less than bricklayers, and a "nerd" is an opprobrious term for any really bright kid, and school buildings are falling down around us, that we cannot long survive as a viable and progressive society.

Yet, in most of the rhetoric about school reform and what you and I ought surely to do to change things, there is a disproportionate share of articulate views about what's wrong and too little about genuine solutions. No one with any common sense would ever say that just throwing money at our problems will solve them but even wiser persons would not continue to presume that they can be solved without enormous increases in resources.

We know that given adequate resources, we can teach every reasonably normal child in America, regardless of circumstances-- race, background, or social class -- what he or she needs in order to at least have a chance in an expanding lifespace. But where is the moral courage, the audacity, the leadership, if you will, that will put us on that road?

We are convinced that, quite simply, the answer to that question is that we have to re-develop it and that means that all of us in a great variety of leadership roles must begin to give more serious effort to fulfilling our responsibilities.

II

LOOKING AT THE MILITARY

Within that set of conditions, the concerns for what might constitute the proper training and practice of education administrators are understandable.

The purpose of exploring military leadership was to see whether or not, other reasonable circumstances notwithstanding, there are lessons that could be learned that might have useful application to the preparation and practice of educational administration.

In pursuing such a venture, we were clearly aware of important limitations.

Our investigation constitutes "qualitative" research. Accordingly, we never considered this study as anything more than

a fairly intense exploration and to that extent, we submit that what we think we've learned is little more than well-informed opinion. We assumed no postulates nor derived any theorems; we tested no hypotheses and we engaged in no content analyses of our recorded comments. We developed no instruments nor administered any.

We concentrated our interest only at fairly high levels of military [Army] command thus we did not explore enlisted personnel leadership although we were impressed by the extent to which that kind of leadership is also developed. But our interest was in the corps of officers and the processes through which such persons move into important leadership roles and what happens to them in the bargain.

We did ask a lot of people a lot of questions; we accumulated a large collection of documents and examined most of them; read all or parts of a number of books, biographies, and some more recent military histories. We focused our concerns on leadership development patterns, (and thus, to some extent, on pathways toward promotion in rank), on ethical concerns, on changes in style and what is valued, on training, on particular tactical operations, and on staff relationships. In summary, our focus was, fundamentally, on how the Army conceives and tries to operationalize a complex process by which its leaders learn to lead.

There was more than all of that of course, but that serves as the framework for these comments.

III

CONTEXTUAL DISTINCTIONS: EDUCATION AND THE MILITARY

The Idea of "Contextualism."

That leadership is above all else, "contextual" was an idea that we started with and though we conceived that notion only as a kind of theoretical idea (that our study strengthened and enhanced,) it was not then, nor isn't at this point, anything like a full-blown theoretical construct; it is rather simply a particular approach we utilized for trying to explain important differences in institutional cultures at different times and under differing circumstances.

Accordingly, any attempt to define the concept is fraught with hazard, yet we do have a fairly well-developed conception about it and present the following with the qualification that it is an idea still in the process of being refined. For us, then:

> "CONTEXTUALISM" is a way of characterizing the extent to which a dominant cohort of particular individuals --

> leaders in this case -- are embedded in the cares, purposes, and historical moments of their organizational cultures, and their unique interpretations of what their functions are within and external to that culture in those times.

Expanding a bit on that, we think that it emphasizes the fundamental idea that people in organizations are products of their own particular "moments-in-time" and are the substance of what constitutes a contemporary organizational ethos. It follows from that idea that there is a kind of "cohort" pattern that characterizes the normative nature of any organizational culture at any particular time and it is our thesis that as these "cohorts" assume increasingly responsible statuses, they gradually become the dominant basis for shaping the definition of what an organization or institution really IS. This provides at least an abstract explanation for the ways any organization changes over time and further provides some basis for understanding what the organization (and the larger "institution" it serves) MEANS for incumbents and, thereby probably, for the rest of us.[7]

By the same token, certain characteristics of any such organization are reasonably "fixed" by tradition and function and it is only within those definitive conditions that "cohorts" fashion their own imprint. We shall have a little more to say about that presently in a discussion of the relationship of contextualism to leadership ideology.

Contextual Differences: Education and the Military

Consider, at the outset, some of the established contextual distinctions between military institutions and educational ones: the US Army for example, is a quasi-closed system with explicit and well-defined entry-points but a university or a school system is a quasi-open system with multiple entry-points. One enters the officer corps in the Army in only one of three ways - through Officer Candidate School (OCS), the US Military Academy (West Point), or through collegiate-affiliated Reserved Officer Training Programs (ROTC.) And every one begins the same way: as a 2nd LT. Very rarely, in times of turmoil or national emergencies, one might get a Congressional Commission or some other kind of special dispensation, but such conspicuous exceptions have very

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[7] For a theoretical treatment within which our conceptualization of "contextualism" is enmeshed, see: John W. Meyer, "Levels of Analysis: The Life Course as a Cultural Construction," pp. 49-62, in: Matilda W.Riley (ed) SOCIAL STRUCTURES & HUMAN LIVES. (Vol. 1 of Social Change and the Life Course.) Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, [American Sociological Association Presidential Series], 1988.

limited promotability and all General Officers -- even those with five stars -- begin as Second Lieutenants and as graduates of one of those three patterns.

In Education systems on the other hand, one may come to a university presidency or even a school superintendency from a variety of origins -- from the business/corporate sector, public policy spheres, directly from the faculty (though increasingly rarely is that any longer the case for school superintendents, university presidents, or even academic deans,) and/or from several different internal functions such as school business management, research, instruction, athletics administration, alumni relations and development, and of course also from "politics" and elected office.

Accordingly, whereas in the Army, every General began as a Second Lieutenant, every education administrator did not necessarily begin as an elementary school teacher. And even though the route to so-called "K-12" school administration generally specifies and assumes that one must have served some period of time as a "successful teacher" all teachers are not of the same status nor is even that a requirement that cannot be, and hasn't been, abrogated. And even when that is not the case, there is little pattern beyond that basic expectation -- one may have remained in the Educating Professions somewhere long after having left the classroom without any prescribed expectation for having to have done anything else. In other words, there is no explicit hierarchy of offices and statuses that persons MUST pass through on the way to executive leadership roles.

But in the Army, one who aspires to being a General Officer will move through every rank in an explicitly well-defined process of ascendancy and that means that whomever will become a General in, say, the year 2010 is somewhere in the US Army right now. Moreover, the potential General Officer will have served in every command-level role from Platoon Leader through Battalion and Regimental Command to Brigade, Division or Corps. And throughout one's career, the expectation that one shall have served in a variety of leadership roles is not only prescribed but one must continually expect to "transide" from command to staff functions. Moreover, as Command responsibility increases, one must also attend several explicitly designed courses and institutions for advanced leadership and perform with some distinction therein. This explicit process of transition into and out-of leadership and "Staff" responsibilities provides a kind of "source credibility" to command personnel and even academic department chairs at West Point must have endured that kind of on-line, field experience; it is part of their "portfolio" for being role models.

In that regard, the Army is kind of just meritocracy whereby one ascends to the next rank up-the-line on basis of

relatively clear and internalized criteria of merit which are well established and understood. Certainly, there are the usual problems in human organizations that thwart ambition. There is always a little luck and politics involved and certainly as well, it is not all that uncommon for some meritorious persons to be "passed-over" for one or another reason or, also on some occasions (though remarkably rare) for one who is considered to be less than deserving to be promoted. On the whole however, considering its scope and complexity, the Army is a system of upward mobility that works.

The competition for promotion is therefore circumscribed and systematized though it is, understandably quite keen as one ascends its ranks. For just one example consider that there are currently 4,427 full Colonels but there are only 397 Generals; but of the latter, only 197 are Brigadiers (the next rank "up" from COL) so the competition is extreme to say the least. Little wonder that the highest rank at which the majority of Army officers retire is LT.COL."

Considering the field of Education Administration on the other hand, how could anyone predict WHO, in about that same year -- 2010 -- might become the superintendent of schools in Kansas City, or Atlanta, or Great Neck, or Ponca City? Are they "in" the so-called 'pipe-line' right now? Maybe so. But what is the exact nature of that 'pipe-line'? Who can say?

By similar token, how might one go about trying to guess WHO will be appointed as President of Siwash Tech or the Doodle County Community College in about the same year?

Impossible!

In Educational culture, there is no explicit pattern by which such ascendancies are normatively or organizationally regulated. There are some generalizable probabilities; for examples: one must likely have done something in the Education professions. Something, that is, that seems "institutionally" applicable. But, the trick, all glorious, is merely to convince Search Committees that one does indeed have enough of that kind of "right-stuff."

One wonders why schools and colleges are considered so sanguine that it is assumed that almost anybody can lead and manage them?

Curiously, even though there are significant academic programs aimed at the preparation of educational administrators,

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9. See, Laura S. Jeffrey, "The Military with More..." ARMY TIMES SUPPLEMENT. October 16, 1989, P3.

there seems to be remarkable persistence in the practice of appointing too many people who have had no such training; and that is the case even with public school administrators even though the idea of "certified knowledge" in the so-called "K-12" sector is much more traditionally established than in Higher Education. In the latter case, there is absolutely NO presumption that higher education administrators must have had any academic preparation in institutional administration.

What our research has demonstrated is that, contrary to the US Army's quite systematic and sophisticated Leadership Development patterns, there is little or no genuine (and therefore, systematic) concern within Educational organizations for leadership development at all! On the contrary, at all levels from Primary Schools to the largest and most complex Universities, there is almost NO systematic recognition nor shaping of potential leadership. It is all left pretty much to circumstance and coincidence -- to whether someone might almost accidentally discover an interest in "schooling."

SOME OTHER CONTEXTUAL DISTINCTIONS

There are other important contextual distinctions, too; some of these are related to the above comments and are helpful in understanding some of the difficulties confronted by Educational organizations were they to attempt to systematically develop leadership potential.

The nature of military organization and culture is such that there is almost automatically less interaction with the external environment when compared with schools and colleges. Being a quasi-closed system, the Army is less subject to external controls and outside reference groups and its reward system is almost completely internal. Educational organizations -- Colleges, universities, and K-12 schools -- on the other hand, are notoriously vulnerable to factors in their external environments. There are alumni, bureaucrats, regulatory agencies, parents, pressure groups, regional, national, and professional accrediting groups, faculty and staff Unions; and there are all manner of academic or professional (outside) societies with which such institutions must constantly cope. In addition many among their employees, especially professional personnel, have strong allegiance to some of these outside reference groups and from whom, they enjoy particular rewards and distinctions over which the institution not only has little control but, in virtue of organizational norms, often encourages.

Of course there is some of that too for the military but when compared to scholastic institutions, there is far less vulnerability and far more predictability in military systems.

IV

The Idea of "Doctrine"

Among particular distinctions between military and other kinds of institutional systems, there is the interesting idea of "doctrine." In the context of Army leadership, what constitutes currently accepted vision, practices, procedures, ethical concerns, operations and tactics, and much, much else is governed by an officially recognized and systematically developed "Doctrine." Such Doctrine is operationally defined by all of the technical manuals, documents, texts, memoranda, an so forth that comprise a complex leadership agenda. Though there are probably few people who really know the extent of the Doctrine, it is nevertheless definitive. And it is official and there are staff functions explicitly associated with its development, revision, and dissemination.

In the field of educational administration there is certainly also a "doctrine" of some nature. But it is so chaotic and disorganized as to be whatever anyone happens to want to believe about what they think they do.

Consider, in that regard, for example, the intense preoccupation within academic Teacher Education over the past ten years with the "knowledge base" for pedagogy. Certainly there is such a "knowledge base" but exactly what it comprises is so complex and so governed by area and level of practice as almost to defy definition -- or, at least, operational definition. What is significantly lacking is any recognized and legitimized source of "authority" for defining it. In the Army, this function is performed by explicit mechanisms; for determining, interpreting, and disseminating the "doctrine."

And Leadership Assessment

Related closely to the 'Doctrine' but also to many other unique aspects of Army Leadership is the complex process of assessment.

Since leadership development and practice is so central to military activity, there is enormous preoccupation with evaluating it. How leadership is assessed is fundamentally addressed in two basic publications: Field Manual (FM) 22-100, Military Leadership, and Leadership Assessment Program.* Guided by these documents, the military assesses leadership according to its published doctrine whereas universities, for example, (and K-12 schools to only a little less extent) generally resist any

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* See, US Combined Arms Center, 1988; and: Department of the Army, 1989.

form of assessment applicable to executive performance in general.[18]

The US Army's leadership assessment processes are rigorous and complex. From a young Cadet's first year at West Point, and throughout an extended career, performance evaluation particularly related to leadership activity is almost constant. In addition to the ubiquitous "US Army Officer Evaluation Report," (which becomes tryingly familiar to every officer) to a variety of "senior leadership self-assessment forms," and counseling, feedback, "fitness reports," Inspection endorsements, and much more, the Army officer's leadership behaviors, potential, decision-making, and ethics are constantly being measured.

In addition, as Army officers move up the hierarchy of rank and command, they are also assessed in a more conventional academic sense; the Center for Army Leadership (CAL) produces much of the "doctrine" and every officer who moves to the rank of LTCOL will have completed the leadership "course" at Ft. Leavenworth. Likewise, the Army War College at Carlisle, PA dedicates much of its curriculum to principles of leadership study and simulation and requires extensive problem analysis, and rigorous written papers regarding leadership issues and challenges.

By the same token, the US Military Academy at West Point has two academic Departments devoted primarily to leadership and the currently popular "slogan" that permeates the academy and reflects the leadership values of its Superintendent, LTGEN Dave Palmer, is "Leaders of Character for the Common Defense."

And for a great many years, the US Army (as is true of other Branches) fully expects its senior commanders to earn advanced academic degrees in the most reputable institutions and it is not uncommon for many high ranking military personnel to have Ph.D. degrees across a rich variety of fields.

In summary, US Army leadership assessment activities are impressive, remarkably objective, and quite well-understood by both those who apply them and those who are subject to them. Moreover, all leadership programs at Army installations are subject to rigorous and frequent formal inspections and other measures of worthiness.

Do all graduates of its various programs qualify as dynamic leaders possessing qualities desirable in military and civilian

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[18] John C. Ory and Stephanie A Parker, "Assessment Activities in Large Universities," RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION. 30 (4), 375-386.

leaders? No, certainly not. Nor are all equally prepared or equally gifted for highest levels of leadership responsibility. But, as COL Howard Prince, chair of West Point's Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership, told us:

> "We cannot make every Cadet here into a Patton or Eisenhower but I can state without fear of contradiction that every Cadet is a better leader after completing our program and the longer they remain in the Army, the better at leadership they will most likely become."

And he added: "Although warfighting is our ultimate function, leadership is our real business."

SO WHAT?

Recognizing that educational institutions are obviously quite different than those of any branches of the military how can one presume to make any reasonable comparisons?

The answer is somewhat common-sensible -- both are organizations; both do have an authority structure; and both do have an established pattern of expectations; explicit goals; well-defined systems of upward mobility; and both presume that decision-making is important; and both have quite well-defined systems of roles and statuses. There are still other familiarities but the point is made.

Accordingly, there are a number of things about the US Army's notions about leadership that have some useful meaning to those of us who worry about the same process in other kinds of organizations.

V

SOME IMPLICATIONS RE: LEADERSHIP

One of the more significant things we began to appreciate -- and it was a fundamental idea we had going into the study is this: There's a very important difference between leadership and management. As LT. GEN. Dave Palmer told us during an absorbing hour and half one cold March morning in 1989:

> One needs to be careful not to put leadership and managerial skills into competition; there's a great deal of overlap but you can be a manager --a pretty good one, and not be a leader. I suppose you can be a leader and not be a very good manager -- it's harder for me to see that, I guess. But for us -- in the Army -- the distinction is an important one. You can't manage people up a hill!

Interestingly, the Army (in fact all aspects of the American Military) went through a period in the late fifties when "management" was very pervasive throughout the Services. That was heralded by the arrival of Mr. McNamara as Secretary of Defense. Considered one of the so-called "Whiz Kids," he had installed a number of new management techniques and new management technologies at the Ford Motor Company and was much infatuated with rational and systems-analytic techniques. In those days, all of us in varieties of large organizations were reasonably convinced that almost any of our problems could be solved through the application of linear programming and systems-analysis methods. We had discovered the computer and were being initiated into the "information age."

This emphasis on "management techniques" in the US Army was recalled by another interviewee with whom we talked at Ft. Leavenworth. A LT.COL., in the faculty at CGSC, he told us:

> In those days, if an ambitious and bright young officer was skillful in managerial technology... and the Services were deeply into growingly complex weapon systems and entirely innovative intelligence-gathering and large-scale operations research paradigms and that sort of thing... such a person could go up rather quickly. That was a quick ticket in those days.

US Army "doctrine" has changed from that kind of emphasis; the emphasis presently is on "bold, confident, reliant but ethical leadership;" on 'warfighting' rather than on technical competence in detailed management. The phrase we heard repeatedly especially at West Point is: "Leaders of character for the common defense." It's GENERAL Palmer's phrase and it's visible and pervasive throughout the Academy.

Yet in our own field of Education still today, "management" is highly placed. The authors are impressed by the extent to which our daily mail brings us a whole variety of "stuff" most of which seems to suggest that if we could just improve our "management" skills, we could conquer the Educational world. These include promotions of fancy Notebooks (with expensive binders) which we could subscribe to for only about $500.; or "Institutes" --usually at quite exotic resorts and where one wouldn't be tied-up so much that he or she couldn't get in a couple rounds of golf; or video and audio tapes, books --little ones [for busy executives?] but very expensive! There is a literal avalanche of this kind of thing.

We decided that at least part of the reason for this deluge of helpful hints is owing to the fact that Schools of Business have been the fastest growing sector in Higher Education for the past fifteen years and all of those graduates have to do

something to earn their keep -- they are doing it by telling all of the rest of us how to manage our enterprises.

But in almost none of this barrage of material-assistance, even still, is there much mention of leadership. In directing the affairs of schooling, we are still too much enamored by management and not enough by leadership.''

Perhaps the second most emphasized thing we heard -- and this came up in every one of our interviews with high ranking Army personnel repeatedly -- while managing military concerns requires very high levels of technical competence, the essence of leadership is trust and reliance.

There were many times when a particular Commander told us that he knew that he could carry-out a particular mission or assignment better than any of his subordinates but that he had to learn to let them do it. We were told that this is a very difficult thing for Commanders to learn especially when they had very recently been in that same role themselves.

But one can't learn to lead unless one does it and unless those who expect one to do it have some confidence and trust in their ability. It is for this reason that it is often said -- and is indeed accurate -- that the most important decision a board of education makes is the hiring of a superintendent.

A third thing we learned is that effective leadership depends on accurate and timely information and on clear, articulate, and efficient communication.

One of the seemingly obvious lessons is that too often we either assume that we know what people mean when they tell us things or we're too reluctant to ask them to make it clearer. As one COLONEL told us in the NATO staff:

> There is truly no such thing as a reluctant question. There is real danger that some inexperienced officers are fearful of appearing dumb by asking what may seem to them to be a stupid question. That reluctance can be fatal. That's especially the case when a complicated mission is in preparation. If everybody involved doesn't explicitly understand what's going on, somebody is going to screw-up.

'' Interestingly, this same point is made by Warren Bennis in a recent book. He asserts: "Lead, (don't) manage: there is an important difference. Many an institution is very well managed and very poorly led." [Warren Bennis. WHY LEADERS CAN'T LEAD. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1989. p.17.

Two other things we learned have particular application for the functions school administrators. The first of these is that there are different degrees of "intimacy" in leadership. What does that mean?

It means that in some circumstances, there is a closer and more direct relationship between the 'leader' and the 'follower' but in other circumstances that relationship is more diffuse -- it is more distant and more abstract in scope and action. For example, the 'leadership' that a school principal engages in is of the former type; it is closer, more direct, more explicitly directed toward a narrower set of tasks and purposes. In that regard, a Principal is more like a Company Commander or in a very large school organization perhaps more like a Battalion Commander. But a school superintendent's leadership functions are necessarily less direct in many cases --often more concerned with what is external to the schools than what is internal to them. In that regard, they are more like Division Commanders. [There is no useful analogy to school Board Members' leadership. Certainly it is more diffuse still. But the analogy breaks down somewhat at the level of boards since they are necessarily more concerned with policy and the "policy process" in the military is enormously complex.]

In any case, a school principal cannot behave as if he or she is in a diffuse role for organizationally and contextually, that is simply not the case. Yet, and unfortunately, some do behave that way.

All of us know about some principals whom we have elsewhere characterized as operating on the "principle of minimum disturbance."[12] These are Principals with a particular kind of mind-set that defines the best teachers are those who close their doors and never bother them! If any teacher admits he or she needs help or assistance -- God forbid! -- that must be a weak teacher! Such Principals assume that the fundamental quality of good teaching is that it be not only invisible but silent! If any Teacher can't achieve that, he/she, simply must be inadequate.

Still other Principals tend to engage in too much supervision and impose their own sense of correct methods; they can't learn to let people alone or recognize that their own way of doing things is not the only way. They're very much like the other guy in terms of their affect -- they have to have a hand in

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[12] See, e.g., W.G. Monahan. "The (Potential) Triumph of the Half-Baked," Paper at: National Meeting, American Association of Education Service Agencies, (Available from: American Association of School Administrators, (AASA): Arlington, Va.

everything so nothing much gets done. Nothing productive anyway. In both cases, staff are intimidated.

The second of these other couple of things we want to share with you is the importance of sharing itself; sharing responsibility that is. That means sharing credit AND blame; and sharing ideas; and sharing one's ignorance and sometimes even, one's indecision! It means knowing that one doesn't know all there is to know. When it is employed by genuine leaders, there is little pretense or phoniness about it; it is an authentic acceptance of the need to depend on what others sometimes -- often, as a matter of fact -- have to offer. It is often called by several names: the leadership team; or issues-management; or "mission-briefing;" or "task forcing;" or "the temporary system;" by an old name: "democratic administration," or by its newest 'name' -- "**restructuring.**" Whatever it's called, the essence of the notion is the crucial importance of the idea of teaming and team-work.

Now in a sense that is what this whole current excitement about "restructuring" and so-called "teacher empowerment" is all about. In the Army it would simply be unthinkable to plan or undertake any kind of mission or task without "briefing" and when whatever is planned is over or even in process, of "de-briefing." And it would be unthinkable as well that those who are the most intimately involved in the activity would not only attend such "briefings" but that their opinions and their professional competence would not be genuinely considered.

It is only in virtue of deliberate efforts to initiate this kind of team-work that leaders come to learn that trusting and relying on others makes the leader himself or herself look particularly good! One who cannot learn to depend on really good people will probably not attract many and consequently will often fail with the losers they've hired.

Effective leaders in institutional, corporate, and political organizations today -- those people whom Harlan Cleveland calls "the knowledge executives" in his marvelous book with the same title[13] -- seem to recognize the fact that the most successful firms are those in which employees share in ownership and/or participate in management. In the Corporate sphere, consider such companies as Avis, Healthtrust, Unimar, Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, Toys-R-Us; the real assets of such good and profitable organizations are those with good people and increasingly, those that engage in profit-sharing.

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[13] Harlan Cleveland. THE KNOWLEDGE EXECUTIVE. New York: E.P Dutton, 1985.

Now we do have to find ways of getting and retaining "good people." We can't do that very well until we make the Education Business more attractive and that means that we must increase the levels of compensation and the quality of organizational life.

But clearly implied in this way of thinking about "restructuring" are the two most essential elements of effective leadership: trust and reliance. In every conversation we held, leadership was ultimately defined in these terms. We want to conclude these comments by considering these concepts in a little more detail.

VI
TRUST AND RELIANCE = CONFIDENCE

The most successful measure of truly effective leadership is pervasive confidence. This means confidence in the leader by those who are led, and confidence in the leader by the leader himself or herself. Confidence is the consequence, and sometimes the antecedent, of trust and reliance.

'TRUST'

Leadership at any level in the US Army is, according to internalized belief systems, training, practice, evaluation, and performance, a matter of 'trust.'

GENERAL Palmer tells us:

> "Leadership is based on trust. In the Army you cannot be an effective leader unless you are a leader of character. Trust is based on that -- on integrity, honor, character, whatever you want to call it...without that, you simply cannot be an effective leader. So a man or woman must be a leader of character. But it's more than that. Ok, then what is character? Now that's complex and we talked about that a lot. We concluded that, essentially, it amounts to two things: Knowing what you ought to do, and having the moral courage to do it. So it's a complicated combination of knowledge and will. It is more than just integrity or honesty -- you can be a very honest person and not have the strength of will to be a leader.

Knowledge and will. Essential ingredients in leadership?

When one examines even a sampling of the Army "doctrine," that duality is evidenced. "Knowledge" and "will" get reinforced

through all variety of the training activities, the various Staff roles and functions, the assessment procedures, the operations exercises and "think-tank" strategies and tactical cases that are studied and re-hashed. Throughout the Army "system" this basic notion, well-stated by General Palmer, is elsewhere echoed by others of those with whom we talked and who said similar things even though they had no reason to know of Palmer's sentiments.

Consider these comments by COLONEL Frederick W. Timmerman, Jr., Director, Center for Army Leadership (CAL) at CGSC, Ft. Leavenworth:

> "This installation has a long and a distinguished history so far as military leadership development is concerned -- in a sense, we're a kind of post-graduate and 'continuing' Education operation... but one quite explicit and clear emphasis in our overall programs has to do with the idea of understanding what trust and reliance really mean in Command functions -- both up and down the line -- and we spend a lot of time on the ethics of leadership."

The whole enterprise at CGSC is further recognition on the part of the Army that leadership development is a constant, on-going, and recurring process of growth, training, development, and practice. The same is true of other "branches," i.e., the Navy, Marine Corps, and the Air Force, and although it was beyond our capacity to examine any of those, we learned that similar kinds of on-going continuing education are well established in the other branches.

Nevertheless, the focus of our interests was on leadership training and development and, accordingly, we were particularly impressed by the academic emphases that were placed on "trust," "reliance" and "confidence" in both superordinates and subordinates. So much was that the case, that it tended to dominate our various conversations.

Consider some comments by MAJOR John Graham, who was assigned as our "guide" at CGSC, and therefore one with whom we engaged in many conversations. He was also the Instructor for one of the classes we "audited." An ROTC graduate, at a time (late 60s) "When," as he put it, " Not many people thought ROTC was a very attractive proposition..." he also holds two MA degrees -- from Brigham Young University in Public Administration and from the University of Utah in Political Science. A bright, articulate, and thoughtful man, he told us that in the class he teaches in "Leadership Ethics" there are many provocative debates.

MAJOR Graham:

> The curious thing about 'trust' -- so far as Leadership is concerned -- is that it has at least two important and, I'd guess, almost distinct dimensions. On one hand, there is the dimension of 'confidence.' One has to have some confidence in one's leaders -- that they know what they're doing and why. But the other dimension is equally important -- it has to do with whether they are capable of being ... you know... willing to rely on people. I can have all the confidence in the world in some people but, sometimes, it may be very hard for me to just be able to say, 'Well, I can depend on that guy to do his job.' It's very hard sometimes -- especially when, maybe you know better about that, to just be able to sit back and say, 'Well...what the hell, I have to rely on him.' So, I guess I'd say that sometimes reliance is harder than ... well... just being confident. Confidence is vital but sometimes, a little different than suddenly finding yourself almost totally at risk by someone on whom you just have to rely. Under those circumstances, you can get awfully anxious about how much you can really depend on people.

CONFIDENCE AND RELIANCE

Confidence and reliance. These, then, are the fundamental building blocks of knowledge and will and constitute a kind of operational definition of "trust."

In Educational administration, we often see conflict between these notions, frequently occurring when School Boards worry about whether or not they can rely on executives; when the executives worry about the extent to which their fiduciary (superordinate) authority is willing to let them do their jobs, and support them when they do it.

A conversation that one of us had with a British Commander (A BRIGADIER) of NATO forces brought this same issue into clear perspective. We were talking about the Falkland Islands War. Intimately involved in that campaign himself, he pointed out early on in the interview, that the effectiveness of that operation was a function of the exactness of leadership and training on one hand and explicitly clear understanding and commitment from the highest political authority on the other. The Prime Minister had said, in effect, "Whatever you decide to do,

know without question that 10 Downing Street will back you to the hilt."

BRIGADIER Ackworth:

> It was all pulled-off very smartly by clear understanding of what we were explicitly authorized to do. There was never any doubt about our mission, you see; nor was there ever any questioning of the way it ought have been done. Our training had been reasonably sound, our officers and men from top to bottom knew what was expected of them, there was remarkable cohesiveness and coherence to our planning and we just went and DID it. But there is just no question that training and leadership were the fundamental bases in its rather surprising success. And make no mistake -- certain of our enemies were extremely competent and well-trained. But perhaps in final analysis -- we had superb planning, knew exactly what we wanted to do, exactly how we thought it should be done and, -- maybe most importantly -- we just knew that the "Iron Maiden" was in our corner!

The reference to the "Iron Maiden" was, of course, to Margaret Thatcher, England's Prime Minister, and it was an affectionate and respectful metaphor. The principle is more profound; that unless there is unequivocal political and policy support for any kind of initiative, and confident reliance on professionals, operational activity is compromised.

The lack of that single-mindedness and coherence at the political and policy level was too often the case in the Vietnam War. And of course that raises an important question and one that we posed on a number of different occasions:

> Is the Army's system of "doctrine-and-leadership-and-training" versatile and appropriate to whatever circumstances challenge it?

Most of those with whom we spoke were candid and straightforward with us about this. The general consensus? Not necessarily. Moreover, policy-makers often make the rules.

The importance of the "context" is no more clearly at issue than in this question. Some of our conversations disclosed that, regardless of the efficiency of leadership training and development, reality imposes and changes the leadership circumstance.

For example, during the height of the Vietnam War, it was reported to us that the leadership curriculum at the Army War College changed but little even though the conditions that would dominate a European "land-war" -- on which most of the principles of Warfighting" were fashioned at our military leadership graduate centers -- was completely different from the kind of limited, circumscribed, "protracted war of attrition" (as General Westmorland labelled it,) that we engaged in Vet Nam. Consider these comments by LTGEN D.R. Palmer:

> The conflict was not only a military one. Economic, political, and psychological factors at times required equal or greater emphasis than purely military activities. We weren't used to having our wars served up that way.[14]

This situation -- the relationship of leadership issues and the experiences of Vietnam -- was a frequent basis for many of our conversations in interviews. It is pertinent simply because there had been so much emphasis in our interviews on trust and reliance and confidence and will.

What the Vietnam War demonstrated so clearly is that feature of the leadership "context" that has to do with the translation of policy into operations. In the case of Vet Nam, it was <u>national</u> policy at highest levels and military strategy; but the importance of consensual agreement and operational understanding cannot be overemphasized.

According to many of those high ranking officers with whom we talked who had served in Vietnam, though we had unlimited power, we <u>limited</u> ourselves in applying that power; moreover, most of our operational theory -- as stated above -- was not conceived for incursionary activity, and policy decisions further created a kind of constantly temporary force. (Personnel were rotated after one year of service in Vietnam.)

In any case, the clear difference between the British experience in the Falklands and the American experience in Vietnam -- given that the two circumstances were significantly different in scope and complexity -- is, at least, something owing to differences in commitment and support and "<u>trust-and-reliance.</u>"

Yet under any kind of circumstances, leadership development

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[14] Dave Richard Palmer. <u>SUMMONS OF THE TRUMPET.</u> New York: Ballantine Books, 1984. p. xxi.

that internalizes profound commitment to the idea of trust and reliance breeds highly probable competence and productivity.

VII

Conclusion

In the final analysis perhaps the fundamental lesson we've learned from our study of Army leadership is really a rather simple one: everybody involved needs to have some notion about what's going on and they need to want to be, and to feel that they are, a part of it; when that's the case, things seem to run remarkably well.

And that leadership development doesn't just happen in virtue of people getting moved "up" an organizational hierarchy. It happens best when it is thoughtfully conceived. That means that potential is identified, shaped, allowed to 'try'; is rigorously but honestly assessed, and provided direct feedback on strengths and weaknesses.

Who's job should that be? The colleges and universities? Partly - but only partly. The development of effective leadership is a professional obligation, therefore all of us have a part to play. We are all involved, or ought to be.

In that regard, we close these comments with two anecdotes.

In one of William Faulkner's novels, there's a marvelous line; an old guy is driving a wagon and team of mules out of a field; he confronts a worker standing right in the middle of the road, and he yells: "Get on the damned wagon or get out of the damned way!"

And then there is an apocryphal story about a chap who saw a driverless car coming toward him rather slowly. He ran over, jumped in and pulled on the emergency brake. Feeling terribly heroic, he said to a fellow who approached him at about that time, "Well, I sure stopped her!" And the other guy says, "Yeah, I know --I was pushing her!"

The leadership implications of those anecdotes we shall leave to your own wisdom.